

Message Text

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FOR SECRETARY FROM AMBASSADOR

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, MZ, RH, US

SUBJECT: SECRETARY'S MESSAGE FOR PRESIDENT MACHEL

REF: STATE 296389

1. I MET WITH FOREIGN MINISTER CHISSANO THIS MORNING AND LEFT WITH HIM A COPY OF YOUR REFTEL MESSAGE FOR DELIVERY TO PRESIDENT MACHEL. I TOLD CHISSANO THAT IT WOULD BE MOST HELPFUL TO US TO HAVE MACHEL'S AND HIS COMMENTS ON THE CONFERENCE, AND ANY SUGGESTIONS THEY MIGHT HAVE ON MEASURES THAT COULD BE TAKEN TO ENSURE A SUCCESSFUL OUTCOME OF THE TALKS. I VOLUNTEERED MY OPINION THAT WITH GOOD WILL ON ALL SIDES THE CONFERENCE COULD SUCCEED; THAT THE CONFERENCE REMAINED THE SUREST AND QUICKEST WAY TO BEING ABOUT MAJORITY RULE IN ZIMBABWE; AND THAT THE CONSEQUENCES OF FAILURE IN GENEVA, AS YOU HAD NOTED IN YOUR MESSAGE, WERE FOR CONSIDERABLE INSTABILITY IN THE AREA AND NEEDLESS BLOODSHED.

2. CHISSANO PROMISED TO SEE THAT YOUR MESSAGE WAS DELIVERED TO MACHEL AT ONCE. HE THOUGHT THERE A GOOD CHANCE MACHEL WOULD HAVE SOME COMMENTS TO PASS TO YOU. IF SO, CHISSANO WOULD ARRANGE A MEETING FOR ME WITH THE PRESIDENT, OR HE (CHISSANO) WOULD PASS THE COMMENTS ON TO US.

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3. AFTER GLANCING QUICKLY AT YOUR MESSAGE, CHISSANO REMARKED THAT THE OUTCOME OF THE CONFERENCE DID NOT DEPEND ON MOZAMBIQUE. HE SAID THAT PEOPLE EXAGGERATE THE INFLUENCE THE GPRM WIELDS OVER ZIPA. "ZIPA AND THE NATIONALIST LEADERS MAKE UP THEIR OWN MINDS." COMMENTING, I SAID THAT I WAS SURE THAT ZIPA AND NATIONALIST LEADERS WEIGHED CAREFULLY THE VIEWS OF MACHEL AND THE GPRM BECAUSE OF THE CONSIDERABLE SUPPORT WHICH MOZAMBIQUE WAS PROVIDING THE GUERRILLAS AND BECAUSE OF FRELIMO'S OWN GUERRILLAS EXPERIENCE. I ADDED THAT I COULD NOT HELP BUT OBSERVE THAT THE PATRIOTIC FRONT HAD AGREED TO THE MARCH 1, 1978, DATE FOR INDEPENDENCE SHORTLY AFTER CHISSANO HAD SPENT A WEEK IN GENEVA. CHISSANO SMILED, BUT DID NOT COMMENT.

4. CHISSANO SAID THAT IT WAS EXCEEDINGLY DIFFICULT FOR THE ZIMBABWEAN NATIONALISTS AND ZIPA TO DEAL WITH SMITH. "THIS IS A MAJOR COMPLICATING FACTOR AT THE TALKS." HE SAID THE NATIONALISTS WOULD BE MUCH MORE READY TO MAKE CONCESSIONS IF THEY WERE DEALING ONLY WITH THE BRITISH. "WE THINK BRITAIN IS ON THE RIGHT SIDE; WE CAN DO BUSINESS WITH BRITAIN."

5. CHISSANO SAID HE WOULD PREFER TO DEFER OTHER COMMENTS UNTIL AFTER HE HAD TIME TO DISCUSS YOUR MESSAGE WITH THE PRESIDENT.

6. COMMENT: CHISSANO WAS MUCH MORE RELAXED AND FRIENDLY THAN AT ANY OF OUR PREVIOUS MEETINGS. ONE REASON MAY HAVE BEEN THAT THIS WAS THE FIRST TIME I HAD CALLED ON HIM WITHOUT A NOTETAKER PRESENT. CHISSANO ALSO TALKED WITH A GREAT DEAL OF ASSURANCE AND CONFIDENCE ABOUT WHAT WAS GOING ON AT THE CONFERENCE AND ABOUT THE GPRM'S POSITION, LEAVING ME WITH THE IMPRESSION THAT, AFTER MONTHS OF BEING OUTSIDE OF MOZAMBIQUE AND NOT PRESENT AT IMPORTANT DISCUSSIONS OF THE FRONT LINE LEADERS ABOUT RHODESIA, HE IS NOW VERY MUCH IN THE PICTURE AND WORKING CLOSELY WITH MACHEL ON SOUTHERN AFRICAN MATTERS. IF TRUE, THIS
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IS A PLUS FOR US.

7. OTHER SUBJECTS DISCUSSED WITH CHISSANO WILL BE REPORTED SEPTTEL.
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